

# Co-Teaching to Meet Needs of Exceptional Learners



## Carmel High School is Making it Happen!



**WE ARE** Carmel High School, located just north of Indianapolis in Hamilton County and have a population of 4,900 students all on one campus. We are extremely proud of the immense opportunities and programs that can be offered to our student body because of the great supports that have been built over time. One program for which we are very proud is our co-teaching model.

**OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES** largely benefit from the size of our school and the availability of a large set of course offerings. Additionally, a diverse faculty who can facilitate learning in broad ways is imperative to our overall success.

**OUR TEACHERS** are trained in the co-teaching model based on the research of Wendy Murawski and Marilyn Friend. During each year we add new teachers to the co-teaching model to ensure ongoing sustainability. In this model, the general education teachers are the content experts with the special education teachers delivering the specially designed instruction. Ownership of student success by both teachers is crucial to our mission of meeting all student needs.

**OUR PROMISING PRACTICE** is designed to ensure meaningful graduation outcomes for an increased number of students. Four years ago, we implemented the co-teaching model at Carmel High School. Our implementation of co-teaching was based on the premise that several students with disabilities were capable of receiving a high school diploma; however, the students continued to struggle in the traditional classroom structure. We implemented co-teaching in the core classes (English 9, Algebra & Biology) with our Algebra class meeting daily. The general education teacher along with the special education teacher used the various forms of co-teaching (station, parallel, team, and alternative) along with specially designed instruction to assist the students in learning the standards for each class and earning credits. From the first class of freshman, to now, our co-teaching classes have grown from four sections to eighteen across all grade levels. In the 2016-17 school year we will expand to a record twenty-three sections. The inclusive co-teaching classes have helped numerous students with and without IEPs achieve their goal of graduating from high school.

**OUR STEPS** began when our first group of co-teachers volunteered to be a part of the co-teaching experience. Careful selection of teachers (general and special education) along with annual professional development ensures our success in our co-teaching classrooms. Administrative support has been key in the continued growth of the co-teaching program at CHS. The co-teaching model is present at the elementary level with implementation in the middle schools during the 2016-2017 school year.

**IN OUR OWN WORDS** "Co-teaching has helped me get into Ball State University for my special education major of mild/severe disabilities," Aaron B. Class of 2016. "Co-teaching classes have gotten me to my senior year so I can graduate on time with the other students," Jeremy K. Class of 2016.

For more information about the district's co-teaching practices please contact [lgibson@ccs.k12.in.us](mailto:lgibson@ccs.k12.in.us) and visit our website at: <http://www.ccs.k12.in.us/chs/home>